

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO NIACT IMMEDIATE

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NODIS

CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG

SUBJECT: MESSAGE FOR PRESIDENT SADAT

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY

1. PLEASE PASS THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT SADAT
THROUGH FAHMI.

2. DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

YESTERDAY I SENT A VERY BRIEF PRELIMINARY ORAL REPORT TO
ISMAIL ON OUR TALKS WITH MR. GROMYKO HERE IN WASHINGTON
ON THE QUESTION OF THE MIDDLE EAST. THUS FAR WE HAD ONLY
TOUCHED UPON THE SUBJECT LIGHTLY. LAST NIGHT I HAD A
FULLER DISCUSSION WITH HIM, AND I AGREED TO HAVING A
FURTHER EXCHANGE WITH HIM AT OUR FINAL MEETING WHICH WILL
TAKE PLACE SUNDAY NIGHT.

AS I REPORTED TO ISMAIL, GROMYKO HAS BEEN MODERATE IN HIS
ATTITUDE, ALMOST PLAINTIVE IN HIS EXPRESSIONS OF SOVIET

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DESIRE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PEACE PROCESS OF THE MIDDLE

EAST. HE MADE CLEAR THAT THE SOVIET UNION OBJECTS TO WHAT HE HAS CHARACTERIZED THE SEPARATE AMERICAN EFFORT WHICH HAS

RESULTED IN THE EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI AGREEMENT. HOWEVER, BEARING IN MIND THAT IN MY EARLIER MEETING I HAD WARNED HIM FIRMLY AGAINST ANY UNTOWARD INTERFERENCE IN THE ON-GOING PROCESS OR THE AGREEMENT ITSELF AND THAT SUCH INTERFERENCE COULD AFFECT OUR OVERALL RELATIONS, I NOTED IN PARTICULAR AT LAST NIGHT'S MEETING HIS INDICATION THAT THE SOVIETS DO NOT INTEND TO OBSTRUCT WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL.

WHILE THE DISCUSSION LAST NIGHT ON THE MIDDLE EAST WAS EXTENSIVE, IT WAS, AS YOU MIGHT EXPECT, A VERY INCLUSIVE ONE. GROMYKO HAD NO SPECIFIC IDEAS AS TO HOW WE MIGHT PROCEED. HIS DUAL EMPHASIS WAS THAT THEY HAD BEEN LEFT OUT OF THE PEACE PROCESS AND THEY WISH TO QUOTE ACT JOINTLY UNQUOTE WITH THE US ON THE MIDDLE EAST. HE HAS NO CLEAR IDEA HOW TO DO THIS. HE SAID THAT NEITHER SYRIA NOR THE PLO ARE INTERESTED IN GOING TO A GENEVA CONFERENCE AT THIS TIME AND THAT THE SOVIETS THEREFORE WOULD NOT ATTEND A GENEVA CONFERENCE. HE SAID THAT THIS VIEW WAS BASED ON QUOTE CONTACTS WITH SYRIA UNQUOTE AND HE INSISTED ON PLO PARTICIPATION AT THE OUTSET.

MR. PRESIDENT, I EXPLAINED THE AMERICAN POSITION TO HIM IN TERMS WHICH WILL BE VERY FAMILIAR TO YOU. I TOLD HIM THAT WE HAD INFORMED THE SYRIANS, ISRAELIS, EGYPT AND OTHER ARAB STATES THAT THE US IS PREPARED TO UNDERTAKE A SERIOUS EFFORT TO GET NEGOTIATIONS STARTED BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAEL, EITHER IN A BILATERAL OR MULTILATERAL SETTING. I TOLD HIM THAT WE DO NOT SEE THE EGYPTIAN-ISRAEL AGREEMENT AS AN END IN ITSELF BUT AS A STEP TOWARDS AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT, AND THAT I WAS CONFIDENT THAT IT WAS NEITHER OUR DESIRE NOR YOURS TO STAND STILL AND TO DIVIDE THE ARAB WORLD. I SAID THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO WORK THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS, CONSIDER THE RECONVENING OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, OR CONSIDER A MIX OF SUCH CONSULTATIONS, I ALSO STRESSED CANDIDLY
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THAT UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS INSISTENCE ON PLO PARTICIPATION AT THE OUTSET WOULD LIKELY KILL THE CONFERENCE OR PRECLUDE ITS CONVENING. I SAID THAT WE WERE PREPARED TO CONSIDER WAYS TO HAVE THE CONFERENCE CONVE NE IF THIS WAS THE DESIRE OF THE STATES CONCERNED, AND THAT WAYS MIGHT BE EXPLORED FOR PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION AT SUCH A CONFERENCE AT SOME LATER PHASE. FINALLY, I ALSO SAID THAT WE WERE WILLING TO MAINTAIN

CONTACT WITH THE SOVIETS AND CONTINUE OUR FURTHER EX-
CHANGES OF VIEWS.

MR PRESIDENT, THESE ARE THE ESSENTIAL FACTS. NOW I
WANT TO GIVE YOU MY JUDGMENT ON THE SOVIET POSITION.
THEY SEEM CONFUSED WITH RESPECT TO THE MIDDLE EAST AND
HAVE NO CLEAR CUT STRATEGY. THE CONCERTED STRATEGY
OF EGYPT AND THE US TOGETHER HAS THROWN THEM OFF BALANCE.
GROMYKO WANTS THE SOVIETS IN ON THE PROCESS OF PEACE,
BUT HE HAS NO CLEAR CUT IDEAS ON HOW THIS CAN BE DONE.
I DETECTED CONTINUING CONCERN ON HIS PART THAT SYRIA
MIGHT INDICATE TO US A WILLINGNESS TO PROCEED TO
NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL UNDER US AEGIS, AS WE HAVE
DONE ON THE EGYPTIAN-ISRAEL AGREEMENT, AND THAT THIS
WOULD LEAVE THE SOVIETS OUT. I HAVE THE IMPRESSION
ALSO HE HAS ACTUALLY BEEN DISCOURAGING THE SYRIANS
FROM EITHER GOING TO GENEVA OR OF GIVING POSITIVE IN-
DICATIONS TO US ON NEGOTIATIONS WITH SYRIA UNDER US
AUSPICES. THIS IS ONLY AN IMPRESSION, AND I WOULD
DEEPLY APPRECIATE YOUR JUDGMENT IN THIS REGARD. IN
ORDER TO AVOID ANY MISUNDERSTANDING WITH ASSAD I WANT
YOU TO KNOW THAT I INTEND TO REPORT TO HIM DIRECTLY --
THOUGH IN A MUCH MORE ABBREVIATED FORM -- JUST WHAT
GROMYKO HAS SAID TO US AND WHAT OUR POSITION IS IN
THIS REGARD.

I KNOW, MR PRESIDENT, THAT WE AND YOU HAVE GONE THROUGH
A DIFFICULT PERIOD IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS SINCE THE
ACHIEVEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT. I HAVE ADMIRERD FROM AFAR
HOW MAGNIFICENTLY YOU HAVE HANDLED THE VERBAL ATTACKS
THAT HAVE COME FROM CERTAIN QUARTERS IN THE ARAB WORLD
-- ATTACKS WHICH IN PART HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED BY THE
SOVIET UNION. BUT I AM ENCOURAGED, AND I HOPE YOU ARE,
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THAT THE WORKING GROUP IN GENEVA SEEMS TO BE CONCLUD-
ING ITS DELIBERATIONS SUCCESSFULLY, AND I WOULD LIKE TO
BELIEVE THAT OUR TIMELY INTERVENTION A FEW DAYS AGO
HAS HAD A CONSTRUCTIVE IMPACT ON THE ISRAELI POSITION.

FOR THE FIRST TIME, PARTICULARLY IN THE CONTEXT OF MY
TALKS WITH PERES HERE, I GET THE FEELING THAT THE
ISRAELIS ARE BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND THAT IF THEY CAN
SHOW SOME GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF THE POLITICAL AND
PSYCHOLOGICAL CURRENTS IN THE ARAB WORLD, OF YOUR POSI-
TION IN THE AREA, OF THE WISE AND COURAGEOUS WAY IN
WHICH YOU ARE LEADING BOTH EGYPT AND THE ARABS TOWARDS
MODERATION AND PEACEFUL PURSUITS--THAT INDEED THE
RECENT AGREEMENT MAY VERY WELL BE THE TURNING POINT
WHICH YOU AND WE HAVE WANTED. WE ARE BOTH REALISTIC,

MR PRESIDENT. WE KNOW THIS WILL TAKE TIME AND THE PACE OF NEGOTIATIONS, PARTICULARLY AS IT RELATES TO THE

SYRIAN-ISRAELI ASPECT OF THE PROBLEM, WILL TAKE TIME. BUT I AM MORE CONVINCED TODAY MORE THAN EVER THAT WE ARE ON THE RIGHT COURSE AND THAT MOVING TOGETHER WE CAN ACHIEVE OUR COMMON GOALS.

JUST A WORD ON THE PERES VISIT. FRANKLY, IT WAS A BETTER VISIT THAN I HAD REASON TO EXPECT. THE REASON I SAY THIS IS THAT PERES SEEMS TO BE MOVING IN THE DIRECTION OF TRYING TO GET ISRAEL TO ADOPT A REASON-ABLE POSITION ON THE IDEA OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAEL. HE SAID PUBLICLY AFTER MY MEETING THAT ISRAEL IS READY FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH SYRIA WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS.

INSOFAR AS THE ONGOING MILITARY ASSISTANCE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE U.S., HERE ARE MAIN FACTS. DURING THE REASSESSMENT, WE HELD UP, AS YOU KNOW, ON SOME ITEMS.

WE HAVE LIFTED THE BAN ON THESE. MOREOVER, THERE WAS A LIST, LONG IN EXISTENCE, OF SOME OTHER ITEMS OF A LESS SIGNIFICANT CHARACTER WHICH WE WILL NOW RELEASE AS PART OF THE NORMAL ONGOING MILITARY ASSISTANCE RELATIONSHIP. AS TO OTHER ITEMS WHICH ISRAEL IS INTERESTED

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IN, SUCH AS THE PERSHING MISSILES, THESE REMAIN IN THE STUDY CATEGORY AND NO COMMITMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE.

FINALLY, MR PRESIDENT, I WANT TO TELL YOU HOW MUCH PRESIDENT FORD LOOKS FORWARD TO YOUR VISIT. WE HAVE BEGUN IN EARNEST THE PREPARATIONS WITH A VIEW TO ASSURING THAT IT WILL BE FRUITFUL AND PRODUCTIVE FOR BOTH OF US. I AM ANXIOUS THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE COME TO KNOW YOU AS WE DO AS A STATESMAN OF GREAT COURAGE AND VISION, AND I HOPE THAT YOU WILL GET A FEEL OF THE PULSE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WHO SUPPORT STRONGLY THE ADMINISTRATION'S PRESENT POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST WHICH NOW IS NO LONGER ONE SIDED BUT SEEKS TO PROTECT THE OVERALL NATIONAL INTERESTS OF THE US IN THE AREA -- A POLICY THAT RETAINS THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE U.S. BUT IS EQUALLY DETERMINED TO STRENGTHEN THE BOND OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN AMERICA AND

THE ARAB WORLD. IN ALL OF THIS YOU ARE IN INDISPENSABLE KEY.

WARMEST REGARDS.

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